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# Lawyer From Miami Springs ... Springs Back At CIA Rap

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Reporter of The Miami News

Alex E. Carlson is a 39-year-old Miami Springs lawyer whose quiet practice in the shadow of Miami International Airport would seem unlikely to project him to prominence in the pages of a national magazine.

But yesterday Carlson, a husky, affable man, acknowledged that in its forthcoming issue Look magazine names him as the CIA cover agent who recruited American airmen for the Bay of Pigs invasion.

Carlson's role, whatever it was, might never have become public except for the violent death of four fliers from Birmingham, Ala., and the mysterious pensions of \$500 a month still being paid to their widows.

In an interview at his elegant, colonial-style home on Bass Point Road in Miami Springs, Carlson smilingly denied, as he always has, that he worked for the Central Intelligence Agency.

"As far as I know there was no connection with the CIA," insists Carlson.

Carlson agrees he has a firm, Double-Chek Corp., that recruited

aviation personnel, but says the clients for whom it worked insisted on a confidential relationship.

The writers for Look magazine say Carlson and his Double-Chek Corp. were the cover under which the CIA signed up two dozen U.S. airmen in Alabama, Virginia and Arkansas to serve as pilot instructors for Cuban exiles.

Authors David Wise and Thomas B. Ross charge that four of the U.S. fliers died in combat flying B-26 bombers at the Bay of Pigs fiasco. But, they say, the U.S. government has repeatedly lied to their relatives about that participation.

The article claims, too, that President Kennedy gave permission for unmarked Navy jets to fly for one short hour in support of the B-26s.

The four men were Thomas Willard Ray, Leo Francis Baker, Riley W. Shamburger, Jr. and Wade Carroll Gray.

A check for \$245 goes once every two weeks to each of their widows from Bankers Trust Co. of New York. In the beginning the checks, then \$225, were sent by attorney Carlson.

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"I never met the men," Carlson said yesterday. "Employees of Double-Chek did the actual recruiting."

Carlson adds that while the Look article leaves the impression all four men were pilots, two of them, Gray and Baker, were recruited as radio-men.

The Look magazine article says the widows are fearful of talking too much, lest the checks stop. But they recall being told stories of going to a special service school by their husbands when they left their regular jobs with a large Birmingham aircraft firm.

All four also were members of the Alabama Air National Guard and, Look claims, were recruited because of their extensive training with the B-26 bomber.

The men told their wives to write them in care of a post office box in Chicago, and at least one, according to Look, warned his wife later not to talk about her suspicions of his mission because it might result in lie detector tests to find the security leak.

Look says the quartet's part in the invasion began when they volunteered to relieve exhausted Cuban exile pilots in B-26 flights over the beaches at the Bay of Pigs.

It adds that they were supposed to be pro-

tested during a one-hour period at dawn by unmarked Navy jets, but because of a mix-up the jets had arrived and gone.

Ray and Baker were shot down by anti-aircraft on Cuban soil, the article says, and Shamburger and Gray at sea.

Two weeks later, Look says, Carlson visited the widows in Birmingham with a local attorney and told them their husbands were dead. Then he held a press conference at which he announced the four men were lost at sea on a cargo mission in a C-46 plane.

Carlson angered the widows by commenting the quartet "would have had a nice nest egg" if they'd lived.

Today, Carlson sits unruffled on his patio, watching his four kids swim in the back-door lake, and sticks to the story about the C-46 cargo mission.

"That's what I was told," he says.

Carlson quickly scoffs at any suggestion that perhaps he and Double-Chek are still in action.

"I'm just an attorney with a general law practice — real estate, small airlines, aircraft parts firms," he says. "And I'm charter president of the Airport Lions Club."

Would he take on another recruitment mission if it came along?

"You can say I'm available," he replies, smiling.

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